



Babraham CE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110780
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278510
Inspection dates 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Grahame Boyce LI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		CB2 4AG
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01223 832322
Number on roll	78	Fax number	01223 835068
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Jane Hubbard
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr. R Lloyd, Mrs M A Evans

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 22 March 2006 - 23 March 2006	Inspection number 278510
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average primary school with 78 pupils on roll. It serves the village of Babraham and a large rural area to the south of Cambridge. The local area includes the Babraham Institute and several other scientific research establishments and, as a result, the school has a much higher than average proportion of pupils from other countries, many of whom spoke no English before they arrived and several of whom had never attended school in their own country. In addition the school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with significant learning difficulties. Pupil mobility is high and many of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 did not start off in the Reception class. There are two headteachers who share the leadership and management of the school. Only a very small number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is generally above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It serves its pupils, and the local community well, and provides good value for money. This view is consistent with the school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Babraham CE Primary School is a unique community where every child is treasured. The great majority of parents are delighted that their children have the opportunity to enjoy the close 'one big happy family' atmosphere that exists throughout the school. As one parent observed, 'We are extremely privileged to have Babraham CE Primary as our local school,' whilst another praised the willingness of the staff to 'go the extra mile' to help new pupils settle in. Pupils achieve well and generally achieve high standards, not only in English, mathematics and science, but in a range of subjects. Pupils who have learning difficulties and find the work hard, and those pupils who do not speak English at home make even better progress than their peers, because they are supported so well. They often achieve the expected levels in end of key stage assessments. The personal development of pupils is outstanding. By the end of their time at Babraham most have developed in to mature young people who are exceedingly well prepared for their next steps in education and in life. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good, although the school needs now to implement its plans to develop a secure area for outdoor learning and imaginative play. Teaching and learning are good, with all of the staff working together as a team. There has been a very significant improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT), an area of weakness identified in the previous report, and the school is now aware of the need to make the teaching of mathematics as interactive and fun as the learning in other key areas. The leadership and management of the school are good and the two headteachers work together extremely well. The governors now play a full and active role in the school, rigorously holding it to account for its quality and the standards achieved. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, as is the school's capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the well-established plan to develop the secure outdoor learning and imaginative play area for the children in the Reception class. - Further develop the use and application of mathematics so that pupils get better opportunities to investigate concepts and patterns, and achieve even higher standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children begin in the Reception class with knowledge, skills and personal development that are higher than are usually found. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and the majority far exceed expected levels by the time they start Year 1. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and most exceed the expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, meeting and often exceeding the challenging targets

that are set for them. Since year groups are so small and the population is so mobile it is very difficult to track progress, and national performance data must be treated with great caution. Whilst performance data suggests that progress in mathematics and science has not kept pace with the progress made in English, the school has evidence to demonstrate that pupils make good progress in a wide range of subject areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with English as an additional language make even better progress than their peers and often achieve the expected levels in end-of-key stage assessments.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils in Year 6 are dependable and independent young adults who have very positive attitudes to work and are exceedingly well prepared for the next stages in education. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and the school prepares pupils for their later life through school assemblies; lessons in philosophy and in personal, social and health education, and through the school's own caring Christian ethos. Pupils in a philosophy lesson, for example, pondered deeply as they sought to understand the motivation behind the hero's strange behaviour in the story, 'Where the Wild Things Are'. Almost all pupils behave in an exemplary way and those who have behavioural difficulties are managed very effectively by staff. Pupils are exceedingly polite and well-mannered to all adults. The school council represents the views of pupils effectively and, in addition to working to eliminate bullying, has purchased playground play equipment. Pupils understand the importance of making healthy eating choices and enjoy numerous opportunities to keep fit and healthy in physical education and after-school sports. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and are confident that they are doing well. Attendance is above average. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. They are heavily involved in the life of the wider community and are developing an excellent appreciation of environmental issues, raising money, for example, for World Water Day. Pupils have excellent social skills and are being prepared exceedingly well for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good throughout the school and results in the good achievement found in every class. Staff work together effectively as a team and teachers are exceedingly well supported by the large numbers of highly skilled teaching assistants who work so hard to meet the needs of those pupils that require additional support, to excellent effect. Planning is completed diligently and is informed by the assessment data carefully accumulated by staff so that work can be accurately matched to the prior attainment of the pupils. Expectations are generally high and because staff have such excellent relationships with the pupils, the latter are willing and co-operative. There are times,

however, when older children are so keen to get on to the next task that the quality of presentation of their work suffers. Staff make good use of ICT to support their work in other subjects. Whilst the school has worked very hard to improve its provision in writing and science, staff are now aware of the need to make mathematics lessons more interactive and interesting if standards are to mirror those achieved in English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is relevant, interesting and good overall. Subjects are combined imaginatively to provide meaningful activities for the pupils as, for example, when pupils in the Year 5/6 class combined their design and technology (DT) and ICT skills to make and control a 'stirring machine' for use in a scientific experiment. The curriculum for science has been enhanced recently by a concentration on developing practical and experimental skills and a similar approach is now required to transform mathematics into an exciting and interactive subject. The provision for the Foundation Stage is good overall although the school has yet to start work on developing the much needed outdoor learning and imaginative play area for pupils in the reception class. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a wide range of educational visits and visitors to school and there are numerous very popular theme days when the school concentrates its attention on one area. Staff work hard to provide a wide range of clubs in the lunch hour and after school and these are well attended and greatly appreciated by the pupils. The mini-rugby is very well supported and exemplifies the school's approach, being highly competitive and loads of fun. Resources are generally good and the staff work to very good effect to overcome the limitations of a cramped school building.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is exceptional and results in the outstanding personal development of the pupils. The school has a wonderfully supportive and Christian ethos and spares no effort when welcoming new pupils into its family atmosphere. As a result, pupils are quickly 'gathered in' and, whatever their background or circumstances, they quickly feel an important part of school life. They love coming to school because they like their teachers and learn lots of interesting things. Child protection procedures are extremely robust and pupils know that they can approach any adult in school if they have any worries or problems.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The two headteachers work together very effectively to give a consistently clear direction whilst drawing fully on the complementary skills that both parties bring to the role. They are very well supported in their work by hard-working subject managers and an effective and well informed governing body who hold the school to account

with great rigour. The quality of self-evaluation is good and all parties, including parents and pupils, have a clear appreciation of the school's strengths and those areas that still require more work. The school makes good use of the resources at its disposal and provides good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection is good, as is the capacity for further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you so much for making me welcome when I visited your school a few days ago and for answering all my questions. You told me so many interesting things about your school that it made the writing of this report really easy. You all told me that you are very lucky to go to Babraham School because it is such a friendly place and is like one big happy family, and I certainly agree with you. All the staff look after you really well and work very hard to make lessons really interesting. You will be pleased to know that I want them to carry on doing that and to try and make your mathematics lessons even more fun. I think the school is extremely well run and the system of having two different headteachers is working very well. We hope that work will start soon on building a special outdoor area where the youngest children can play and learn and I know Mr Lloyd and Mrs Evans have some very good ideas about what should go in there. I wish you every success for the future. Keep working hard and enjoying your time at the school and I am sure you will all continue to learn and get on well together.